

To Peasants and Agricultural Workers

By

‘A Nationalist Proletarian’ project

Translators' notes:

Bolesław Bierut was the former communist activist and leader of People's Republic of Poland between the years 1947–1956.

This work is a reprint of a speech that Bierut gave in 1952 on the 7th of September 1952 to the peasants and agricultural workers on the occasion of the Spring Festival (pol: dożynki — rus: Обжинки).

If the reader read our previous translated work 'Against Gomulkovschism' (<https://archive.org/details/against-gomulkovschism>) then one may spot that what is interesting here is the focus of Bierut on industrialisation and independence of Poland, compare this with the later Władysław Gomułka's policies which conformed with Khrushchev's vision of Soviet Imperialism (<http://maoism.ru/9097> [Russian]). Reading this speech one can get a clear sense of how Marxism-Leninism was perceived and applied to the Polish conditions by a leader of the second largest independent People's Republic of the Eastern bloc.

We kept the Polish abbreviations where the matter discussed concerned a Polish organisation such as Endecja (National Democracy), Chadecja (Christian Democracy), Sanacja (Sanation), Piast (Polish People's Party "Piast"), PPS (Polish Socialist Party). We did however, chose to translate Pilsudchism (Piłsudczyzm) in the same style we translated Gomułkowszczyzna into Gomulkovschism in our previous Bierut [translated work](#).

We also kept the original name of the mentioned newspaper: 'Trybuna Ludu' (Tribune of the People) rather than translate it. For personal names and names of places we used the Polish spelling: 'Kraków', 'Nowa Chuta' etc. We did however translate into English, the abbreviations concerning non-Polish entities such as 'Hitleryzm' into 'Hitlerism'.

We tried to keep the text as close to the style of Bierut as possible. Furthermore, we made great effort in trying to balance faithfulness to the original with textual clarity. Therefore, possible odd way of phrasing certain sentences is an expected result of that.

Citizens! Harvesters and reapers!

Peasant brothers and all workers of Polish agriculture!

Harvest festival participants from all over the Polish land!

I greet you warmly and heartily on the occasion of today's national harvest festival. I convey to you a strong fraternal greeting to the Polish countryside on behalf of our People's State, on behalf of the workers from factories, steel mills, mines, from all work establishments in our People's Poland! The whole Polish nation is celebrating today with us joyfully the day of the national harvest festival. We have gathered this year for these celebrations in the beautiful land of Kraków, and our feelings are accompanied by the heartfelt feelings of all our sisters and brothers from all over the country, the feelings of the entire nation. Because today our whole Polish nation is united by a fervent desire to multiply with its work, the common yield, that is to say the strength, wealth, prosperity, greatness and power of our united and beloved Homeland — the Polish People's Republic.

Our ancient Polish custom of joyful celebration of harvest festival together best symbolizes this communion with the people, the veneration for work, which creates and multiplies the common prosperity of the nation. It was not until the people's government freed labour from exploitation that our folk traditions were given their proper significance. The work of the peasant and the work of the worker, work freed from the plunder of the landowner and the capitalist, who were driven out by the people's power, brings and will continue to bring more and more abundant yields to the whole nation. That is why the celebration of peasant labour — the harvest festival — is only today in People's Poland taking on the character of a joyous and nationwide celebration.

In the period of the landowners' and capitalists' power there were no (and there couldn't have been) such harvest festivals and such folk celebrations as today. People did not come together from thousands of villages and towns like today, with a sense of common cause and unity of thought, representatives of peasants and workers from all over the country. The Polish nation was divided and incapacitated by the rule of the bourgeoisie, and human suffering was a bitter sentiment that poisoned the heart of every working man. The source of this suffering was the merciless exploitation of the labour of the worker and the peasant by native and foreign exploiters. Neither were there any happy days in the life of the working folk; there were only days, so frequent and so long-lasting, of bloody, arduous struggle: struggle for a piece of bread and for the most elementary right to life. Millions of hungry people in villages and cities wandered without work and without hope. Peasant and worker youth did not have the opportunity to obtain the most rudimentary education and qualifications; they saw no prospect for themselves, no future. Peasant and worker women gave birth to their children with concern and fear that they would suffer misery, harm, and destitution — just like all the children of the proletariat and the rural poor.

Such was life under landowner capitalist rule during the period of reign of reaction and fascism, the notorious governments of Endecja, Chadejka, Pilsudchism and Sanacja, which were ushered by the treacherous agreement between the kulak-ridden Christian-Piast and right-PPS leaders of the then supposedly people's and supposedly socialist parties. Until the Hitlerite invasion came and the monstrous years of occupation, which turned so many of our cities and villages into rubble and ashes, covered our country with death camps, the cemeteries of Auschwitz, Majdanek and hundreds

of other slaughterhouses, and tore from the Polish nation several million people, bestially murdered by the Hitlerite thugs.

Only the state of the workers and peasants — the Soviet Union — put an end to the criminal tyranny of the Hitlerite thugs, it shattered their military violence. It came to the aid of the subjugated Polish nation and other nations, liberating them from the bondage of fascism. Owing to this, the people came to power, the power of the landowners and capitalists in those areas of the world which had been liberated by the blood and sacrificial struggle of Soviet soldiers was overthrown. The army of the victorious working people, the army of the brotherly socialist nations of the great country which is our neighbour, the army of the first workers' and peasants' state, helped bring about the triumph of freedom and justice. This is the great and instructive experience given to our generation by the history of the last decades of class struggle; class struggle which initiated the greatest transformations in the history of our country.

Have we learned the right lessons from these great events?

Citizens! Those who do not know how to draw the right conclusions from the experiences of the nation, from the history of social struggles, can easily fall prey to deception and become prey to imperialist brigands. For the past eight years, since the working people have taken the reins of power and have governed the country, not for the benefit of the nobility and capitalists, but to multiply the strength and wealth of the nation as a whole, Poland is rebuilding, growing rapidly in strength, transforming itself into a country of great industry, and raises from backwardness and decline the farms of millions of smallholder and formerly landless peasants. This progress and increase in the strength of our nation is taking place so evidently and visibly that not even our enemies dare to deny it.

What is the source and basis of this rapid growth of our economy and our culture?

The source and basis of the rapid economic and cultural growth of our nation is the power of the working people, which unleashes the great creative forces of the working masses of towns and villages. The source and basis of the constantly growing strength of our people is the friendship and fraternal international cooperation of People's Poland with all countries in which the working people exercise power.

And what is the foundation and unbreakable mainstay of popular power? The foundation is the alliance of workers and peasants, it is the unity of the whole working people of People's Poland. As long as the parasitic classes, landowners and capitalists, succeeded in breaking the unity of the workers through their agents, in weakening the alliance of workers and peasants in the struggle for the right for the people — then exploitation and capitalist-landowner oppression could reign. But the exploiters did and do to this day everything they can to hide from the masses the truth about the strength of the worker-peasant unity, to prevent by lies, slander and terror this unity of the popular masses, to surround with hatred the countries where the people attained power.

Let us remember that our freedom and independence are being threatened by American imperialism, insatiable in its voracity, and by Hitlerism, eager for revenge, loot and plunder of our lands, which

is once again getting unshackled and grows under the black wings of American magnates, generals and rowdy troublemakers.

But the people's power supported by the foundation of the alliance of workers and peasants, guided by the leading party of the proletariat, which faithfully in its actions upholds the teachings and instructions of the great leaders of progressive humanity — Lenin and Stalin (applause), supported by the steadfast solidarity of the entire camp of freedom and peace — is enduring and invincible. For eight years, since the seizure of power in Poland by the working folk — workers and peasants, our people's state grows in strength — it is a reliable weapon of people's power in the fight against all enemies. The people's state is at the same time the organiser of a planned national economy, the guide of our great construction that is aimed at lifting Poland out of its previous backwardness and transforming it into a country of modern industry and agriculture.

A prerequisite for rapid progress in agriculture is the expansion and modernization of industry. In order for the working peasant to thoroughly transform his economy, so that in the countryside — as quickly as in the cities — prosperity, education, and culture grow, in order for the rural population to make extensive use of science, art, sports, health facilities, etc., factories for agricultural machinery, tractors, combines, auto-mobiles, fertilizers, power plants, roads, navigable and drainage canals, etc., must be built and developed. In order to develop modern housing, economic, educational, and cultural structures that meet the broadest and growing needs of rural areas, it is necessary again to build and develop heavy industry, metallurgy, mining, and such branches of industry that Poland has not had before.

Within the short time that had passed since the liberation of our country, it was necessary first to rebuild what was there but was destroyed, burned, broken. Our first Three-Year Plan, begun in 1947, successfully accomplished this task 2 months before the end of the year 1949. Currently, for the third year already, we are building new large industrial plants, steel mills, mines, factories of cars, machines, tractors, etc. — in a word, great modern industry that Poland was lacking. This construction is going on according to plan, generally preceding the outlined deadlines. The whole nation participates in this construction: workers, peasants, working intelligentsia. It is real because it is achievable, actually being fulfilled in the course of everyday work of the masses of people, programme for building a strong, independent, wealthy Poland, capable of ensuring for all its citizens the fulfilment of their quickly growing material and cultural needs to an ever greater extent. This is what the strength of our workers' and peasants' alliance is based on today, the strength of the ever-growing oneness of our whole nation. It is based on our common work, on our self-sacrificing and creative national effort.

The condition of our victorious march forward, the condition of our strength and security, is both the patriotic attitude of our workers and our intelligentsia, their persistent daily toil and the continuous increase in the productivity of their work, as well as the patriotic stance of the peasant masses, their care in their work and their thriftiness, and their full and timely realisation of their obligations to the people's state.

This is the yardstick by which, above all, civic sense and attachment to the Fatherland are measured today.

Citizens! Sisters and brothers! Peasants and workers! Does it not take on a symbolic meaning that today's harvest festival is taking place here in Kraków, at the foot of Wawel hill, where the great metallurgical complex — Nowa Huta — is being built — the basis of the development of heavy industry and the focus of the entire nation's effort?

As we celebrate our joyous harvest festival today, we have the right to count among the great yields of our common work the achievements of this construction of ours, which is the result of our unity - unity in the work and struggle of the entire nation for a new, happier future, for the flourishing and strength of the Polish People's Republic.

That is why we should increase our vigilance against those who seek to weaken and undermine this unity, and with it our efforts. Although the landowners and the great magnates of capital, who feed on the plunder and exploitation of the working people, are no longer with us, their tentacles, their agents, their deceptions, are still all around us, trying to poison the consciousness of the masses, to arouse distrust, to sow doubt, or to harm directly and in every way the common yield of our work. For the exploiters, for the landowners and capitalists who have not renounced their desire to return to power, for the imperialists and their minions, the greatest defeat is the unity of the working people. For the Polish nation, the unity of the working people and friendship and fraternity with the countries where the people rule is the unbreakable foundation of freedom and independence, is the mainstay of lasting peace and the guarantee of its further creative growth. This is why we should guard this unity as the highest good, as the basis of all our achievements and victories.

At present, the Polish nation is preparing for an enormously important and momentous state act — the election of deputies to the Sejm in accordance to the requirements of the new Constitution enacted on July 22, 1952. To meet its great tasks, the whole Polish working people should consolidate their ranks even more. This is the aim of the Nationwide Polish Electoral Committee of the National Front, which brings together without exception, all existing political and social organisations in Poland, as well as various circles of non-partisan social activists who, irrespective of their personal beliefs or convictions, are united and unanimous in understanding the imperative needs of the Fatherland.

The creation of a National Front of such a broad composition and scope is a great political and social event, which for the first time appears in such a form in the political life of our country. It is a result of a tremendous increase in the level of political awareness of the masses, a result of great ideological transformations which are taking place in the Polish nation concurrently with economic and cultural transformations. The very establishment of the National Front testifies to the ideological and political maturity of our nation, able to unite internally on issues which are decisive on the strength of the state, its role, development and significance. It also testifies to the strength of the alliance of workers, peasants and the working intelligentsia, to their mutual trust, to their internal unity when it comes to the supreme needs of the Fatherland. Does it not also prove that the workers, peasants, and intelligentsia — men and women, old and young, soldiers and craftsmen — have felt themselves to be real co-owners of the country, that they feel a common responsibility for the fate, for the future, for the needs of their country? This is indeed the case. And it is in this stance of the popular masses that the greatest strength of our social, political, economic and cultural transformation lies. Never before in its history has the Polish nation been so united and

ideologically consolidated as it is today in the period of working people's power, in the period of building its new life, its new system of social justice.

The foundations of this system, the tasks of this construction are clearly and eloquently stated in the National Front's Electoral Programme published yesterday. The old electoral programmes of the bourgeois period usually contained a mass of promises, buzzwords and platitudes which were immediately forgotten by the bourgeois parties fighting among themselves for influence once the elections were over. The programme of the National Front, on the other hand, is based on the granite base of our achievements, on the daily work and struggle of the popular masses. It is a program which everyone can verify by evaluating both what has already been achieved and realized in the past years and what is being accomplished and brought about by the working people themselves with their daily efforts. Of course, this program also includes what is ahead of us as the task of tomorrow, the task of the years to come, but this stems from the situation that already exists today, from the facts and achievements that have already taken place. These are great, thrilling tasks, capable of arousing the masses to action and every man to sacrificial work. Only the feckless, soulless people, swayed by lies, selfishness and bourgeois egoism, will stand on the sidelines. Only the kulaks and speculators who stir against the people will find themselves outside the broad national current.

Only the enemies and agents of imperialism can dare to fight, to oppose these great and just strivings of the nation. Only they will try to splinter the unity of the nation, the nation which is walking boldly and resolutely along the new path of its development. But the nation will push away everything that is rotten, backward or decadent. Strong via unity of the working masses, the Polish nation will achieve its historical tasks, it will materialise its economic plans, build a new, better and just social system — socialism!

(Applause)

Citizens! Sisters and brothers! Peasants, workers and intelligentsia!

Let us strengthen and extend the unity of the nation! — This is the slogan of the National Front. Let us unite in the common struggle for peace with all nations who long for freedom and justice, who oppose the crimes and machinations of imperialist warmongers.

Long live the National Front in its struggle for peace and the Six Year Plan!

(Applause)

Long live the Great Ensign of Peace and friend of all progressive humanity — Joseph Stalin!

(Applause. Those gathered are cheering in Stalin's honour)

Long live our beloved Homeland — the People's Republic of Poland!

(Loud, prolonged applause)

“Trybuna Ludu”

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